

earliest settlers are still in use today. Many of our great cities originated as towns that were starting or end points for transportation systems. As trade and commerce grew, transportation provided the necessary link to vital resources that in turn enabled further national growth. On land and water, in the air, and in space, our transportation systems have become an essential element of our Nation's economic health, providing indispensable services and generating employment for millions of people.

This week we acknowledge the contributions of the dedicated people who build, maintain, and safeguard our transportation systems—from the flagman on a highway project to the space engineer. We honor those who led the way in the development and improvement of ships, waterways, motor vehicles, highways, trains, airplanes, and our newest transportation vehicles, spacecraft. The recent announcement of our National Space Policy means that we continue to call for the help of modern-day pioneers on the frontiers of space technology. With public and private cooperation, our Nation is building a highway to space that will serve as an economic bridge to the 21st century.

In recognition of the importance of transportation and of the millions of Americans who serve and supply our transportation needs, the Congress has requested, by joint resolution approved May 16, 1957 (36 U.S.C. 160), that the third Friday in May of each year be designated as "National Defense Transportation Day"; and by joint resolution approved May 14, 1962 (36 U.S.C. 166), that the week in which that Friday falls be proclaimed "National Transportation Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Friday, May 20, 1988, as National Defense Transportation Day and the week of May 15 through May 21, 1988, as National Transportation Week. I urge the people of the United States to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies that will give full recognition to the citizens and groups that operate the transportation systems of our country.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN

**Proclamation 5812 of May 5, 1988**

### **National Older Americans Abuse Prevention Week, 1988**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Each year during May, through the vehicle of Older Americans Month, our Nation honors its senior citizens for their many contributions to our country, its communities, and its families. The vast majority of older Americans are active members of society—working, creating, volunteering, or simply enjoying the fruits of long years of service to others. As parents and grandparents, they extend their contributions through

formation of coming generations of our citizens—their children and grandchildren. The commerce of love between generations—fulfillment of a duty and recognition of a debt—is a ballast that steadies our national enterprise on its voyage from past to future.

Not every older American leads an ideal life, however. Regrettably, some suffer from abuse and neglect, wounds all the more grievous for everything these citizens have done to build and strengthen this land of liberty. For these men and women, years that should be full of satisfaction and appreciation become instead manacles of torment and disrespect from which they cannot escape.

Abuse can take many forms—physical, mental, or emotional. It can come from family members, friends, or professionals; it can even be self-inflicted. Neglect is also a form of abuse, a manifestation of carelessness that can be seen even in situations where an elderly person's basic needs for food and shelter are being met. Loneliness, of course, is its most obvious sign, and fortunately the most easily cured by others.

Abuse and neglect reach their ultimate expression, of course, in occasional cases of—and even organized calls for—euthanasia of the elderly infirm. Older Americans have done their duty. In their twilight years, especially, it is our duty to them that matters. No elderly person should live in fear that he or she is a burden to others or that his or her life will be cut short for reasons of utility or convenience. We can never have too many reminders that the gift of life is ours to cherish and preserve from malice and harm until natural death.

Across our country, State and Area Agencies on Aging, social service, and law enforcement agencies are supporting programs to deal effectively with the difficult problems posed by abuse of the elderly. I urge every concerned American to help ensure that local programs are available to educate people about these problems and to assist both the older person and the abuser to get the help they need.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 222, has designated the week of May 1 through May 7, 1988, as "National Older Americans Abuse Prevention Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of the week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of May 1, 1988, through May 7, 1988, as National Older Americans Abuse Prevention Week. I urge all government agencies, every community, and every American to observe this period with appropriate activities and to strive to assure that every older American can enjoy what the poet called that honor, love, and obedience "that should accompany old age."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

RONALD REAGAN